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This Week in Wabash



Hello, Wabash,

I hope your week is off to a great start. I'll skip my usual introduction about the weather because we all know it's January in Indiana and we know what the deal is. Anyway, I have a lot to share with you today.

As you no doubt know, today is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. One of my pet peeves is when people quote him out of context, for their own purposes. I understand the temptation because he was such a magnificent writer or orator. But, I much prefer seeing his quotes in full, with the original context included. Below, I've collected some of my favorite quotations of his, and in as many cases as I could, I've included the full text. Having said that, there's no getting around including some of the shorter ones, too, because, frankly, he had bars:

- “True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.”
- “Men often hate each other because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they can not communicate; they can not communicate because they are separated.”
- “An individual has not begun to live until he can rise above the narrow horizons of his particular individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity. And this is one of the big problems of life, that so many people never quite get to the point of rising above self. And so they end up the tragic victims of self-centeredness. They end up the victims of distorted and disrupted personality.”
- “There's another reason why you should love your enemies, and that is because hate distorts the personality of the hater. We usually think of what hate does for the individual hated or the individuals hated or the groups hated. But it is even more tragic, it is even more ruinous and injurious to the individual who hates. You just begin hating somebody, and you will begin to do irrational things. You can't see straight when you hate. You can't walk straight when you hate. You can't stand upright. Your vision is distorted.

There is nothing more tragic than to see an individual whose heart is filled with hate. He comes to the point that he becomes a pathological case. For the person who hates, you can stand up and see a person and that person can be beautiful, and you will call them ugly. For the person who hates, the beautiful becomes ugly and the ugly becomes beautiful. For the person who hates, the good becomes bad and the bad becomes good. For the person who hates, the true becomes false and the false becomes true. That's what hate does. You can't see right. The symbol of objectivity is lost. Hate destroys the very structure of the personality of the hater."

- "There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies. When we look beneath the surface, beneath the impulsive evil deed, we see within our enemy-neighbor a measure of goodness and know that the viciousness and evilness of his acts are not quite representative of all that he is."
- "There are certain things in our nation and in the world which I am proud to be maladjusted and which I hope all men of good-will will be maladjusted until the good societies realize — I say very honestly that I never intend to become adjusted to — segregation and discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry. I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few. I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism, to self-defeating effects of physical violence. But in a day when sputniks and explorers are dashing through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war. It is no longer the choice between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence."
- "Somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals. Without this hard work, time becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. So we must help time and realize that the time is always right to do right."
- "Many of the ugly pages of American history have been obscured and forgotten. A society is always eager to cover misdeeds with a cloak of forgetfulness, but no society can fully repress an ugly past when the ravages persist into the present. America owes a debt of justice which it has only begun to pay. If it loses the will to finish or slackens in its determination, history will recall its crimes and the country that would be great will lack the most indispensable element of greatness — justice."
- "The best way to solve any problem is to remove the cause."
- "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial 'outside agitator' idea. Anyone who lives

inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds.”

- “One of the sure signs of maturity is the ability to rise to the point of self criticism.”
- “It may be true that morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me, but it can keep him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important also.”
- “We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct action campaign that was 'well timed' in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word 'Wait!' It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.' We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied.'”
- “I submit to you that if a man has not discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.”
- “There is a sort of poverty of the spirit which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance. The richer we have become materially, the poorer we have become morally and spiritually. We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as brothers.”
- “The rich must not ignore the poor because both rich and poor are tied in a single garment of destiny. All life is interrelated, and all men are interdependent. The agony of the poor diminishes the rich, and the salvation of the poor enlarges the rich. We are inevitably our brothers' keeper because of the interrelated structure of reality.”
- “I believe we ought to do all we can and seek to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps. But it's a cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps.”
- “A man cannot ride your back unless it is bent.”
- “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.”

Well, that's all I have for you today. I'll talk with you next week.

Best,
Rob

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